RESEARCH

SURVEY FINDINGS

Prepared by The Center for the Study of Cannabis and Social Policy
Survey conducted by the Cooperative Cannabis Economy Group
September 2021

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Corporate Cannabis is Here: Farmers, are you ready? Cooperative Cannabis Economy Survey Findings

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In the rapidly evolving cannabis industry of 2021, Humboldt County counts more than 800 individual cannabis cultivation license holders, the most per capita in the world. These are the users for whom the project is designed. The challenges of a well-capitalized competition and industry expectations of maximized production demand that the farmers develop meta competences to organize collectively. To address this need, Cooperation Humboldt (CH) in partnership with the Center for the Study of Cannabis and Social Policy (CASP) have established the Cooperative Cannabis Economy Group (CCEG) to catalyze, educate, and facilitate cooperation and cooperative research and decision-making among farmers to protect the local cannabis economy on the North Coast of California from unethical wealth and resource extraction conglomerates and corporations, and to promote regenerative, values-driven cannabis business. This project has no affiliation with HSU, it is a collaborative effort between Cooperation Humboldt and CASP.

To September 12, there were 82 respondents from Northeast Humboldt and Trinity to Southern Humboldt and Mendocino. The survey reveals three areas of challenge to farmers:
1) low prices
2) high costs
3) lack of access to market

More than 85% would like assistance developing formal or informal cooperative systems.

In this first phase, we utilized a survey to build empathy and understand the needs, challenges and hopes of the users. The survey was designed by the Cooperative Cannabis Economy Group over 5 weeks, first expanding to take in a wide range of possible answers, then, as the collapsing market prices brought urgency to the undertaking, narrowed to focus on farmers on the North Coast of California. We settled on 6 questions with only one for open-ended answers. The survey invitation was distributed in three ways: it was printed with a QR code to the survey form and distributed to dozens of supply stores throughout Humboldt and Mendocino. We also reached out to organizations such as the Humboldt County Growers Alliance, Origins Council, the Trinity Cannabis Agricultural Alliance, the Mendocino Cannabis Alliance and the Eel River Recovery Project.

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Finally, members of the Cooperative Cannabis Economy Group emailed the survey invitation to their contacts in the industry. The outreach elicited responses mostly from Humboldt County, perhaps because wildfires kept fully busy the farmers in Trinity and Nevada County. Response has been extremely high.

The survey opened on August 6. On September 12, we conducted an analysis of the 82 initial survey results which constitutes the body of this paper.

cooperation humboldt
SCAN FOR
2-MINUTE SURVEY
CH Survey
CORPORATE CANNABIS IS HERE.
CULTIVATORS: ARE YOU READY?
Cooperation Humboldt is a group of local community members who are helping to build a solidarity economy on California's North Coast, by empowering residents to meet their collective needs in harmony with nature, without exploiting anyone.
We're non-profit and we offer cooperative development and facilitation. We want to know what services we offer that would help advance your economic success against corporate cannabis. Please take the survey, your privacy is respected.
bit.ly/chcannasurvey

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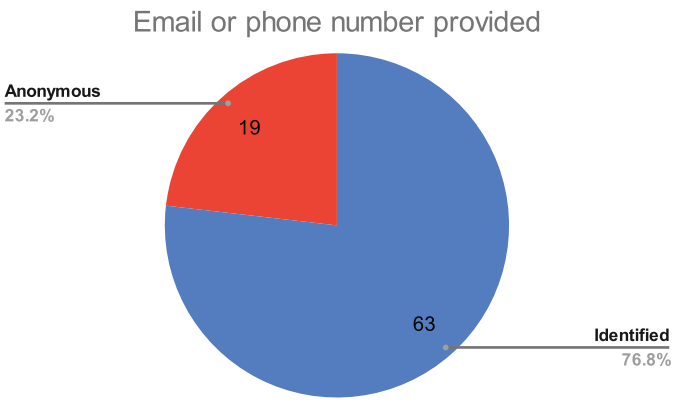
Detailed Findings

Anonymous responses

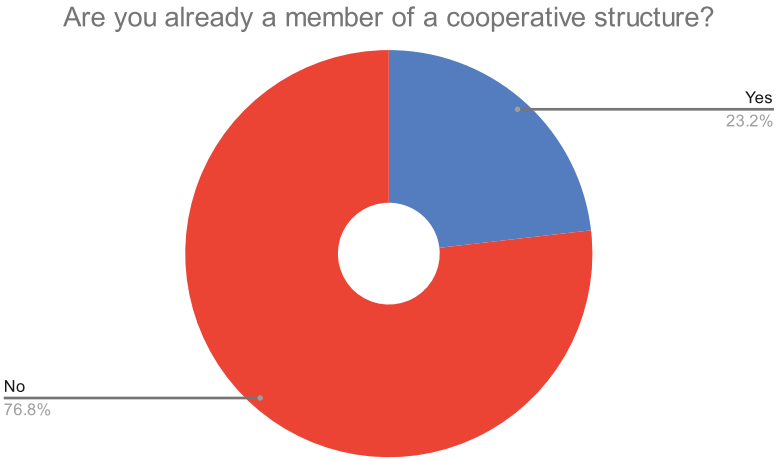
Cannabis cultivators on the North Coast mistrust institutions as a result of decades of the war on drugs. To capture meaningful input, we allowed respondents to remain anonymous. Remarkably, more than 75% were willing to share their contact information for follow-up interviews.



Licensed farmer?

While some were not cultivators o[illegible] licensed cultivators.

Licensed	Traditional	Both	Non-Cultivator
61	6	2	13



Less than 25% consider themselves already part of a cooperative structure. What a cooperative system would look like, whether formal or informal, will be explored and co-created by the stakeholders themselves in Phase 2 of the study.

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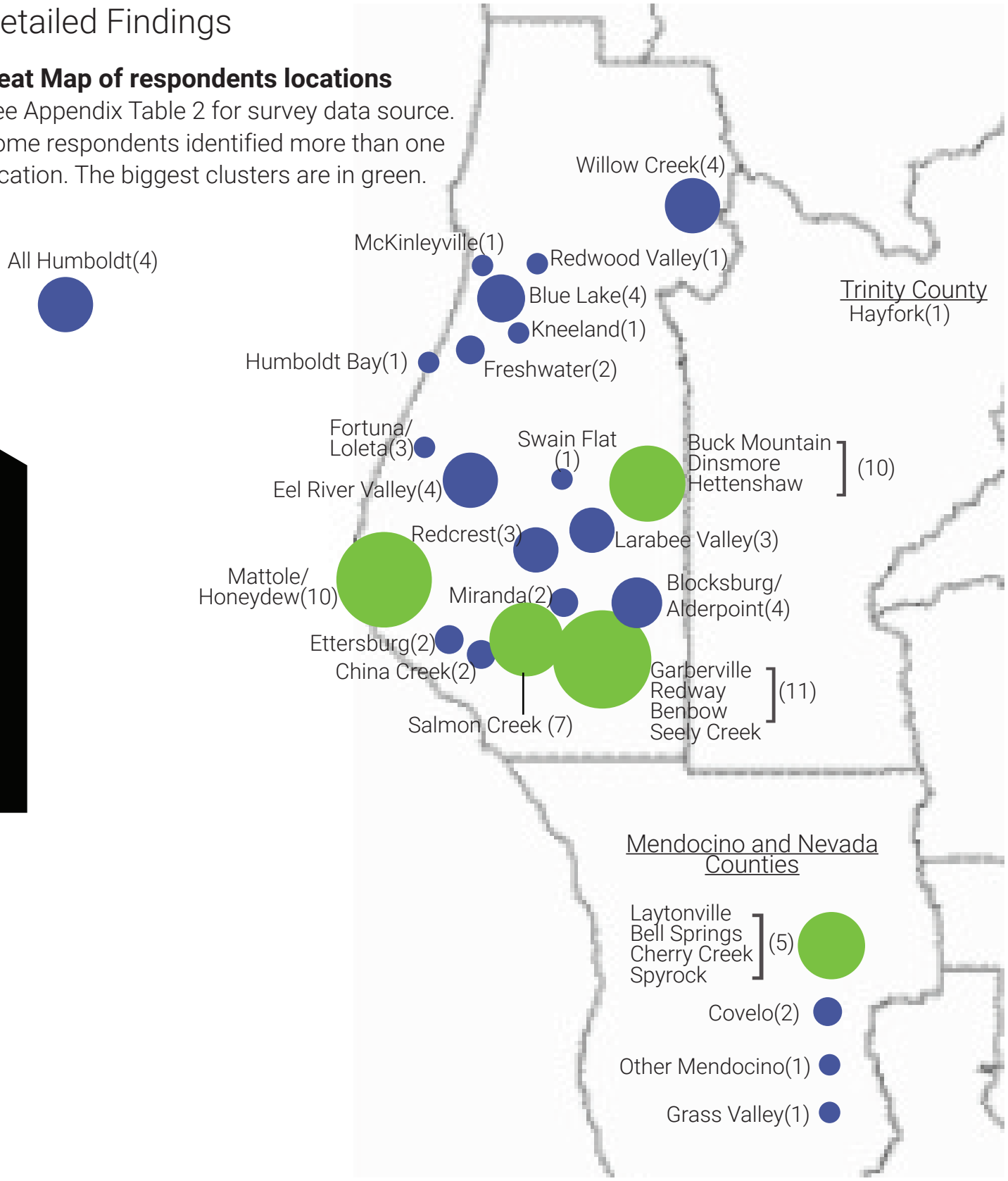
Detailed Findings

Heat Map of respondents locations

See Appendix Table 2 for survey data source. Some respondents identified more than one location. The biggest clusters are in green.



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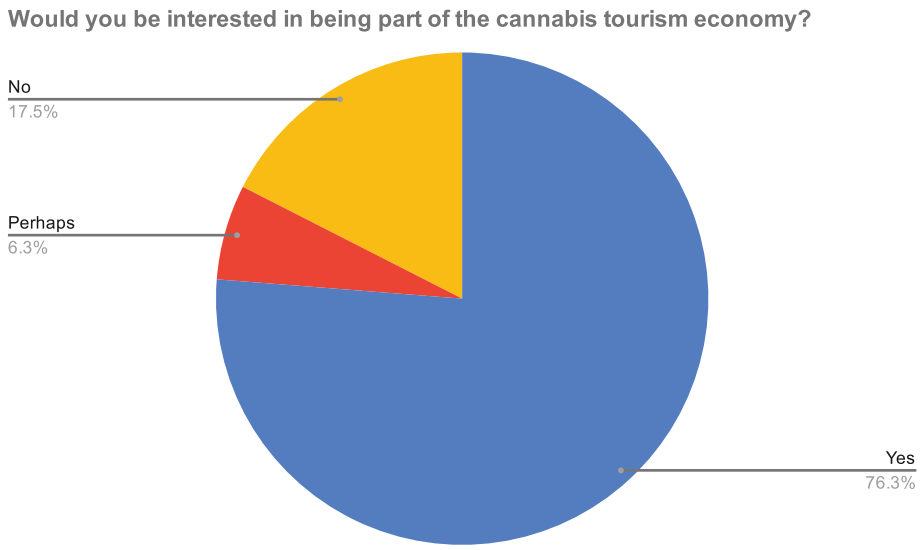
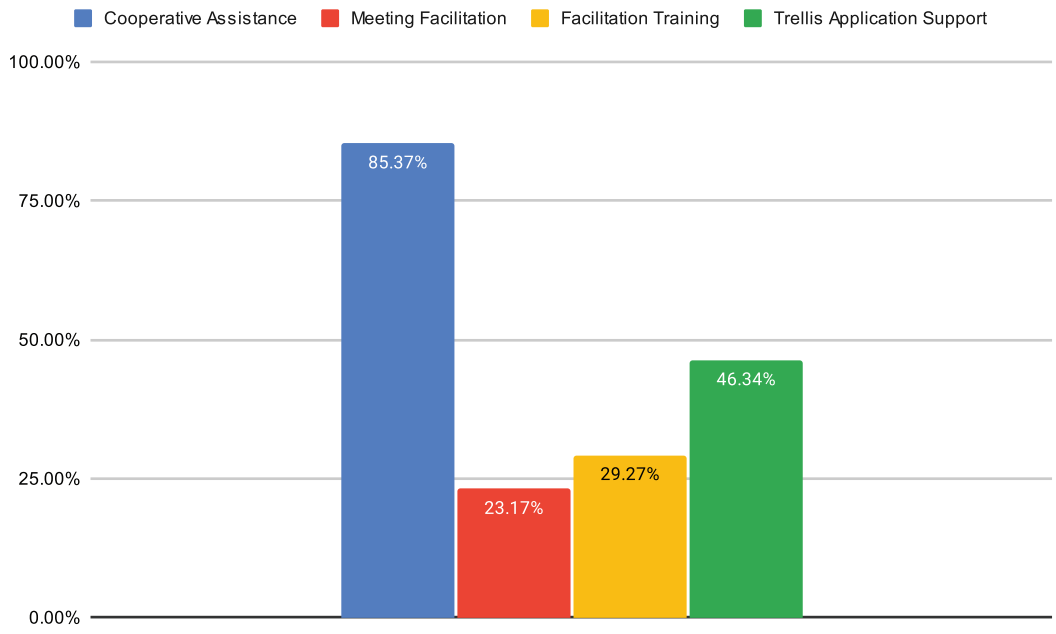
Detailed Findings

Interest in cannabis tourism



Services

The data shows that not only more than 85% of respondents would like assistance in developing cooperative systems, but also that 46.3% need support in preparing Trellis grant applications.



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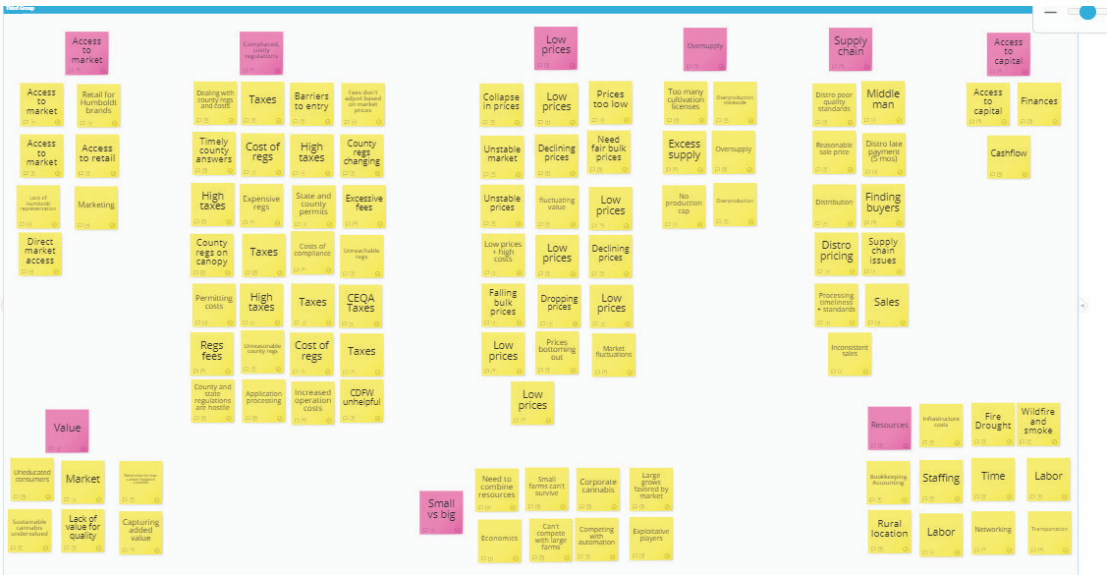
Detailed Findings

To analyze the answers to this open-ended question, we created an Affinity Map that reveals from the ground up what the challenges are and what common themes emerge. Three main issues stand out: low prices, high costs (taxes and fees), and lack of access to market. See Table 4 in the Appendix.



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Conclusion

The Cooperative Cannabis Economy Group sought to understand the needs of cannabis cultivators on the North Coast of California in order to provide services for cooperative systems if there was an interest.

In this first phase, the survey revealed a high rate of response and more than 85% interest in coooperative development in order to overcome the challenges of low prices, high costs (taxes and fees) and lack of access to market.

In Phase 2, we will conduct semi-structured interviews with willing respondents, inviting them to share their thoughts and activities. Further interviews with case users in locations with high responses will be conducted to gather insights into service implementation, and to obtain practical evidence of the result where possible. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed..

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APPENDIX
Table 1

	Are you currently a member of a cannabis oriented cooperative?	As a cultivator which best describes you?	Would you be interested in being part of the cannabis tourism economy?
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Perhaps
	No	Single owner manufacturer	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Lic but not in cultivation and a transitional legacy farmer	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Traditional	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	No
	HCGA	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Homeowner	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Just sold my licensed farm	
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	No
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Decline to Specify	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	HCGA	Licensed	No
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	No
	No	Licensed	No
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Traditional	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	both traditional and licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	MATERIALS SUPPLIER	No
	Yes	Licensed	maybe one day
	No	traditional and licensed	potentially
	Yes	Traditional	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	No
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	No
	No	cultivator support	Yes
	No	Traditional	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	No
	Yes	Licensed	Yes, if it was safe. We are a worry about ripoffs.
	No	No interest in govt permission	Not in the way you mean
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Decline to Specify	No
	No	Licensed	No
	No		Yes
	No	Licensed	Yes
	No	Traditional	Yes
	No	still a traditional cultivator, but in the permit process	Yes
	MCGA	Licensed	Yes
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Decline to Specify	Yes
	No	Decline to Specify	No
	No	Medicinal	No
	Yes	Licensed	Yes
	No	Licensed	Maybe

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Table 2

Which region best describes your location?

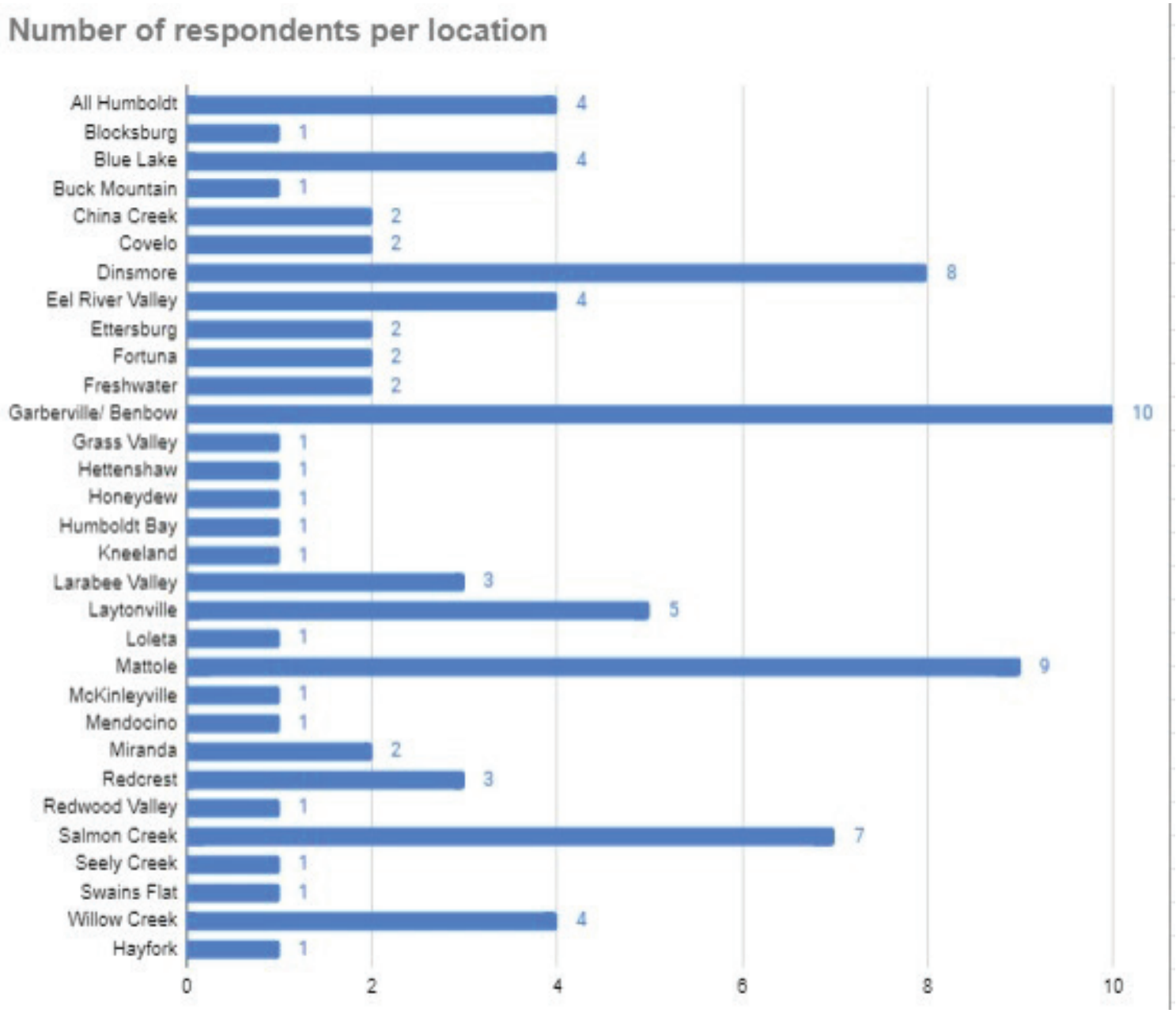

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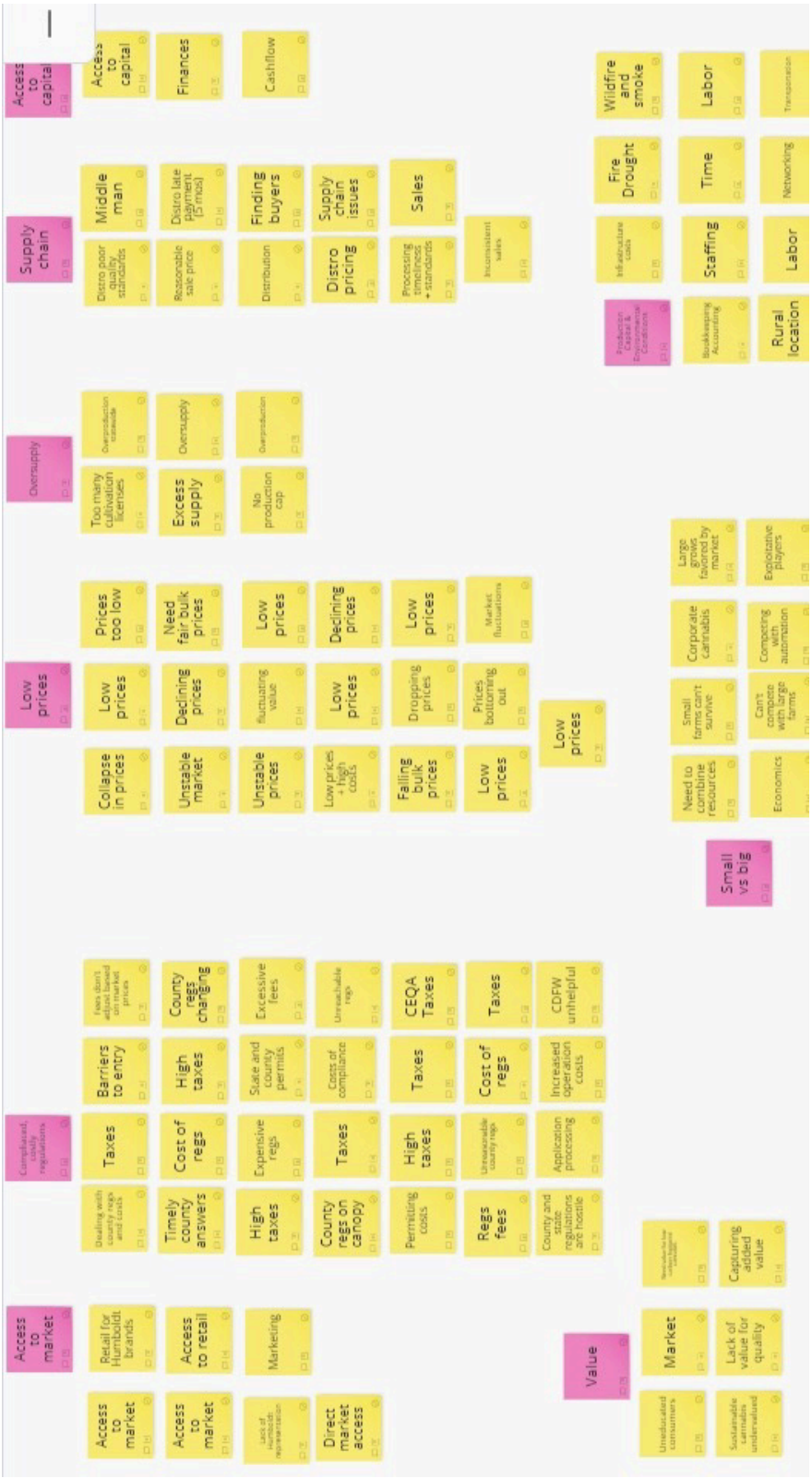
Table 4

What are the biggest challenges/issues facing you?



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